A REDISCOVERY OF "THE COMPANION"

(A SOCIO-PHILOSOPHIC INVESTIGATION)

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A ground-work of metaphysics always ensures the development of moral and ethical values in human beings. The ultimate end of this function will be to recognize the establishment of a good social culture that establishes a harmonious existential enterprise the world over. But due to some implicit constraints such perfect moral and ethical values cannot be expected. Also, metaphysics alone cannot be sufficiently serviceable for the development of social status of satisfaction of material needs. The implanted natural instinct for social needs have ever been working to produce the will for satisfaction of these needs. This type of will may either lead to good or any end in destructive dynamism. The problem of socio-philosophic reconstruction of a society arising out of the necessity for need satisfaction therefore, must be looked upon from the perspective of human being as a social animal. It must fulfill the material needs first and then try to pursue for an overall '*happiness*'. Such an endeavor will be a necessary basis for the development of a "*strong community*" which in turn may make the universe with all its constituents to subsist for a longer time.

Human relations, in an analysis, reveal a closely entwined moral or ethical structure that that signifies the emergent areas of human action in the society. The quest for development of a strong community, is rooted in time on the concept of a good 'will' for development among human beings that necessarily emerges as a result of good actions without attachment to any material life. However, such an effort would appear to some as quixotic whose ethical and moral values does not acclaim to a

social standard (norm). Likewise, the human mind, as a result of growing demand from within for a more satisfied sustenance, has ever moved from time to time towards unfolding of a new socio- philosophic thrust to develop a condition of blissful life that transcends the arena of our common experience and brings a comprehensive outlook on peace and moral wisdom. While such a socio-philosophic approach has the basic criterion of material satisfaction, it does never deviate from the main objective criterion of non- attachment to such things, but only in a progressive state of mental preparedness for transcendence. This will be beneficial to common man as the stringent methods required for transcendence ascertained by some philosophical disciplines are difficult to accept for him who is ever trying to satisfy the preliminary needs of food, shelter, cloth and security. In this context, in a progressive development man can lay stress on the rectification of defects in his psychological nature embedded in it under the onslaught of constantly acting force called '*ego*'.

The constitution of man, though, necessarily involves physical and intellectual potentials, one could find an ever expanding spiritual dimension euphemistically put as 'merging (absorption) of the mind' in this spiritual goal that is nothing else than the '*bliss*' of indescribable nature resulting in a total annihilation of the functional *ego*. This does not mean the end (disappearing) of the world as claimed by some philosophers. As Buddha says: "nirvāṇa is not the end of the world neither does it mean a total annihilation of the individual but it is essentially the merging of the mind in the divine". The upaniṣads also significantly attach the absorption of the mind in the supreme bliss that means retrieval into the divine, not the total destruction of the world itself. Life truly must be syncretistically enjoyable through an insightful spiritual conquest wherein the material necessities become merely substantively non-productive (hindrances).

Now, to review the basic problems attending human mind under the influence of *ego* orientation, it can be made clear that these are related to two main contexts:

a) How to attend the orientation towards the material satisfaction that is the ego entrenched domain, and to get retreat from the bounds of unending sorrows;

b) Why to attend the spiritual mode as a consequential necessity for making life beautiful.

These are the two substantive issues ever processed differently by different thinkers. It is an undeniable fact that every thinker is a product of his social environment. When one is born he tries to adapt to this environment that is given. The succeeding social situation necessarily brings in re-orientations to the new social structures. Sometimes these may not be acceptable and may be insatiable to the conditions of existence that marks the initial impetus of life. The moral principles and ethical codes in such situations, if not well attended may lead to sorrows even ending in social discriminations among human beings. Unless and until the content of social harmony is made practically relevant it will be difficult to have a built- in schema of thought on a life condition that is enjoyable. The point is that unless the tranquility of the mind is achieved the life cannot be made blissful. From a more theoretical perspective invoked by strong quest for knowledge during the human intellectual growth, certain metaphysical philosophers had adventitiously built a society that injected discriminations of various forms among the human beings creating a vicious identity for the thinkers concerned. Irrespective of its derivation of principles on morals and values it generated problems in the form of various kinds of impersonal behaviour among people. The thinkers, for creating a niche in philosophical dispositions, disregarded the human satisfaction factor for the 'social community' and evolved some moral and ethical codes of conduct. Though such codes helped temporarily they were thrown back into the ground by the social movements that ended in some consensus on these social codes. Thus, the socially acceptable codes of conduct helped to ascertain the satisfaction of the society as a whole and the stronger relations resulting from these gives rise to the state of **'the companion'**.

The Relevance of Metaphysics in Social context:

Metaphysics deals with the 'theory of Reality' beyond the realm of generally experienced material lure. Its starting position is monistic, dualistic or non-dualistic proposition. It necessarily entails upon a relational world view based on some rationally evident principles. Reality, in this sense, is beyond any categorical explication. But in a sociological context if reality is not experienced it is not a reality. It is simply a theoretical proposition that may or may not be true. Nevertheless it be speculatively construed. It must be subjected to experience though in an orientation towards metaphysical commitment. Any metaphysical endeavour should therefore focus upon the social necessities. But it is significant that any metaphysical conceptualization proceeds from mental transformation that involves discerning of *ego* and any social development without this is non –committal towards the building of a strong *companion* the social context and metaphysical discipline have a common background of development. The social discipline, however, does not necessarily involve the experience of the reality in our mental arena. The question now is how without experiencing our common ground of existence one could be able to become good, the essential condition of social ethics. This can be explicated in the following way.

First of all, the distinction between the sensible and intellectual experience of bliss must be understood. The distinction comes when one is able to discern the ego. A pure mind cannot associate with the ego directed satisfactions while the impurity in the form of ego creates a sense of satisfaction in enjoying the worldly pleasures. In the later case the bliss is temporary as it dissolves into nothingness as the object of experience disappears. The movement towards social good depends on the degree of associational ego. The effectual existence of ego has a negative impact on the good actions. Only when the dissipation of ego is had ordering and integration of the entire humanity will take place which is the principle of social ethics.

From the standpoint of metaphysical understanding the basic thesis becomes structured on an abstractive concept of Reality as does the Advaita system of Indian Philosophy follow. Such an approach makes the world of experience an illegitimate proposition and Knowledge (Jñāna) as the only Reality. But this view may be ambiguous from the point of sociological schema of thought for if one is able to experience the Reality it must be in this world itself. Also goodness of actions depends solely on the nature of the mind. In order to develop strong relations within the community one should have a pure mind that can bring the ego under its control. This itself will lead to bliss which implies that there is no longing for any worldly objects. According to the sociological context, this bliss is non-dual and is the consciousness (cit) – the Reality.

A *de-re-belief* on a metaphysical reality, however, is conceptual. This nevertheless denies the relationship between the absolute and the individual. Reality, though is beyond the subjective/ objective conceptualization is made subjective. This implies that Reality is brought down to the level of subjectivity which is a case of substitutive error. This substitutive tendency has given way for objectification of the Reality as Gods and symbols, in due course to adapt to the social restructuring. Though the real intention behind this seems to be the proper understanding of Reality such a re-orientation had ended up in the most vicious form of worship – Idol worship and the related karmic customs. It is to be understood that there are no pure conceptual means for our thoughts to become subjective in a social context, for, relations cannot be denied here. What is desirable is an experience of the highest bliss as Reality and leave no room for acknowledging any beyond to this bliss. This consideration will indicate that whatever the means an individual depends for experiencing Reality as bliss, its success depends on factors unique to that endeavour, and not part of the mental repertoire of that individual. Then, if reality lacks any propositional attributes how can one try to understand It? As the upaniṣads disclose, even speech or word cannot reach there turning back, language is of no use. Does it mean that Reality

requires linguistic/symbolic expressions to be known? Certainly not. For, Reality can only be experienced in a particular mental mode and that experience is of the nature of bliss. Likewise, symbols are expressions of objective nature it cannot be said that these have extra linguistic significance. But these linguistic/symbolic expressions have some relevance when their underlying essence 'the Power' is considered. Thus the attributively intended thoughts on Reality cannot be justified on the ground of the indescribability of the Reality.

A Socio—Philosophic Approach to the Values and Social forms of the Community:

The constitution of man is indicative of the necessity of human relations for sustainable progress and development. It necessarily demands emergent areas of human action that can restrain the society from false actions. False actions, false beliefs and customs are the most visible signs of a under-developed society. Beliefs involve thinking of a proposition as true and attributing it with properties. This may sometimes lead to false notions about the truth of the propositions which individuals are supposed to believe because of some constituent expression. If some propositions are expressible otherwise by definite descriptions than what actually they mean it may be taken in the same sense whether it is true or not. People will be committed to these propositional beliefs in time and then would make these the ground for actions. From beliefs follow actions and customs that result in values- either good or adverse. But when a belief expresses the true implication of the subjective proposition it will make this belief perfectly intelligible leading to the good behaviour of the individual.

The socio-philosophic approach seems to be independent of the "Knowledge" content unlike the metaphysics that accepts it as the ultimate goal of human existence. This is because of the fact that the bliss component as against the knowledge is more acceptable to common man. If a naively objective approach is centered on the bliss component no reference to knowledge could be made at all, for '*bliss is reality*'.

Further, knowledge is subjective and it transcends the mental realm and saying that knowledge is apprehended is absurdity. The mode of presentation of the Absolute is indeterminate and hence it cannot be claimed as knowledge. But the condition of possibility of experience could reveal it as bliss alone and therefore bliss is ultimately true to experience. A methodological investigation into the psycho-physical complex reflexively can bring down the Absolute to this level that indicates the Bliss component which is non-dual. If there is any knowledge constituent in this bliss that would mean a difference in the non-difference which is not there. Hence experience is nothing but the bliss only. Also, because of this experience all sorrows will be dispelled off and there will be good only.

Now, to look into the social form of a community it can be said that the structuring of a community is dependent on human actions. Human action is nothing but the impulse generated out of the mental satisfaction or inner freedom. Freedom stands for the pure form of mind without any afflictions and hence the social form of a society is certainly dependent on the degree and perception of inner freedom of each individual. The central concern for an individual, therefore, is to develop a mental tranquility, to engage in social activities that can never be detrimental to others. Mentality should entail the more subtlety within itself and this should become a framework for action which is the centre of social development.

The main target of any social philosophy is to set self–evident axiom on experience. A concerted effort to distinguish the mentality characterized by complete tranquility with that of sense-directed qualities will bring in new dimensions to the social framework. It is a recognized fact that there is a common chord that underlying the mental phenomena in each being. But due to the associational ego factor this chord becomes suppressed. To dispense the ego factor the most attractive method is to get into mental concentration through Yogic discipline. The main purpose of this discipline is to make the mind world-fit (to realize the common

chord) that can be ascertained through practice of concentration. Once the mind is stabilized by suppressing its afflictions it becomes world-fit. This is nevertheless easy than done as the ego ever tries to overcome every act of suppression of it. A trivial consequence of an irrational mind is illocutionary action that necessarily brings disorders in the social forms.

The term 'values' is confined mainly to the world of sense experience but as far as society is concerned it exclusively marks the 'index' of happiness or satisfaction within an individual. The social perspective cannot but 'see' the world of sense experience defined as such instead it should define these by investigating into the essence. The distinction between 'inner' and 'outer' appearance has to be thought of for sincerely developing the functional values. The values that define the social form are related to the mental functions as the former are subordinated to the latter. When pure concepts prevail in the mental echelon then, there will intrinsically develop a better social dimension that takes into account the human goal of happiness. The regulative and integrative function of ego that leads to paradoxical situations becomes insurmountable as the mind dissociates from this ego and thereby emerges the already concealed "**Harmony**".

Now, to subscribe to the good human actions within the society it is necessary to continue the performance of functions that must bring in an 'order' of things to establish values in life by differentiating the disjunctive phenomenon of ego adhering to the mind. The current trends in defining the boundaries of ethical values based on material satisfaction has become a subjugate inadequacy. The crisis of such desperate orientations leads to collapse of human societies in the long-run. A pure mind can accomplish things on its own rather than do things that are derivatives of ego functions. Therefore, the need required for the society is a form of '*control of mind*' that would adhere to the socio - ethical discipline and would ensure social cooperation. The path may be differently operational in the modern era, yet, humanity has to move forward to its ultimate goal of 'happiness'.

Metaphysics and the Socio - Structural Syntaxes:

Metaphysics is concerned with 'a priori' of things. It recognizes a principle that stands for the Absolute which can be identified as experience by a disciplined mind. Though there is distinctive differentiation in the form of conceptualization regarding this Ultimate principle among individuals, the society as a whole can experience the same principle through an ideal condition of harmonious existence. Such an ideal state constitutes the "a priori" for a society. Since each individual has an interlocking relation with the members of the society it enables one to assess the ideals and values in terms of their adequacy as a means for realizing this principle.

From the metaphysical point of view also "bliss" (ānanda) is the reality. Its nature cannot be grasped so easily as it seems empty of concepts or percepts.. One cannot venture into nothingness or vacuum. When the bliss component is experienced it can be felt either as indescribable or even nothingness. This bliss is not distinct from the Śakti (power). In fact, the basic propositional content that can be said as the ideal of society is to recognize the Reality as the Power only. Hence it is to be understood that any propositional content that is fixed on this 'a priori' is a positive perception in the form of bliss while that under the influence of sensual experience is only a negative one. It is a truly non – dual experience living no space for any sort of distinction. Even the content of this bliss cannot be explained. In such a context it can be categorically said that a propositional positive perception can only lead to an expectation of 'a priori' which in normal perception seems to be the absence of the expected thing or is negative perception. Accordingly, what is experienced in a peculiar mental realm with all rhythmic activities holding back is nothing but the non-dual bliss.

From the ontological stand point the question of existence of God is debatable while it can be asserted that the bliss as God can satisfy all beings and this may then serve as the ideal of the society. To discover God or deduce the '*a priori*' to an attributive entity is inadequate

in meeting the internal demand. There is no God in the real sense but Reality only. God is only a standard symbolic presentation of the Reality that denotes the expressional content of mental phenomena. Hence it is never dissociated from the ego (even after withdrawing the mind from worldly temptations, there still remain the "mental impressions"). Again, anything that is to be expressed requires manifestation of the Reality which is possible through ego content in another (expresser such as human mind). Any intentional categorization of the Absolute attributed to an immature mind has to be disapproved off .Therefore it can be asserted that whatever practical reasoning involved in conceptualizing God with or without attributes the intention of the thinker has to be directed towards a condition that satisfies the internal urge for a blissful life and this can be achievable when the mind gets completely absorbed in the bliss. Also such a motive should focus not only on oneself but development of the society as whole and thereby the Universe.

On the other hand, the inability to discriminate the expressive thought proposition from the non-expressive bliss will lead to some amorphous concepts or false notions. These may pave the way for unwarranted beliefs and actions that may end in a social structure of frenzied behaviour. As opposed to regulative actions originally construed upon 'a priori' conditions regulative actions will become obligatory which never allow one to realize his ultimate goal of attainment (experience) of bliss. Hence such illocutionary acts augmenting social discriminations requires rethinking on the relatedness of mental states with the Absolute for a better experience of the life situation.

On examining one such social ambiguity in India – the sacrificial actions, developed in favour of conceptualization of God, the point of disparity in the social system arising out of amorphous concepts can be understood. Sacrifice, was originally intended to mean the self surrender- a surrender of the egoistic tendencies for uniting with the Absolute. Such a proposition was drawn into the inappropriate contextual notion of sacrificial rite to be enjoyed by a particular community needlessly

bringing into social discriminations. This evil system developed into such an extent that the present day social evils like caste system. If one is really intended to experience the Reality one has to render the total conception of that through self-surrender which would come from within ones own mental realm where no caste or other external differences get interwoven with the perceptual thoughts. In such a state of self – surrender an internal common unity among all the created beings will be recognized and this is the sense of oneness and it is the intension of the recognition of **'companion'.**

Now, to illustrate the companion, mutual dependence between the ultimate, the mind, the person and the fellow beings has to be considered as most important. Since the psyche is the link between man and the Reality it should be regulated of its ego factor. The materialistic craving is the effectual result of ego. Here, one gets in into satisfying ones own lust, the interests of the fellow being are sacrificed. But when there is complete alienation of ego the fellow being will be of concern as of ones own being. Thus a venture on universalization will start and finally it will lead to oneness – the goal of every being that is the bliss of the permanent nature.

The Companion in a Social context – The mental collusion:

The mind, as it is, cannot be distinguished or explicable as something objective. But it is undeniable that it has greater transitivity towards Reality than the objective function. Thinking is the enterprise of the mind and pure thoughts and concepts leading to different actions evolve out of this mind only. On the other hand, the ego element can veil the mind of its pure nature. Inspired by the ego- centric mind man desires to fulfill as much as possible his need satisfactions through means that may even be detrimental to the interests of others. If a man with such innate tendency is allowed guide the society the result will be rancorous to the vision of a companion that essentially needs harmonious blend of relations. A sincere and assertive judgment or action evolves out of the human mind only when it is concerned with his so called companions.

This will be perfectly consistent with the good of the people in the society and it may serve as the basis of social ethics. Unless there is an effort to dismantle the ego content one cannot expect to achieve the final goal of happiness - the companion. Such an effort brings a collusion of all commensurable ideas and actions originating in different minds that are always directed towards the bliss component- a further recognition of *'the companion'*.